

Hepatitis Support Network of Hawai'i

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Email address:
Fax Number: 768- 3826

Subject: River Street Residence

RECEIVED
JUN 8 6 59 AM '09
CITY CLERK
HONOLULU, HAWAII

Dear Council Members:

I am Ken Akinaka, MRA, Executive Director, Hepatitis Support Network of Hawai'i. I strongly support the River Street Residence – a project that is crucial for our community, the homeless, and the taxpayer. This project will actually improve the neighborhood and reduce the loitering of transient people in front of the area.

It will also reduce the numbers of chronically homeless individuals by providing permanent rental housing, not a temporary shelter, for individuals and families who are chronically homeless.

Street homelessness is a grave problem on the Mainland and we cannot escape the severity of street homelessness in Honolulu. Earlier this year an estimated 1,193 were homeless in Honolulu and approximately 390 were identified as chronically homeless. As we develop alternatives to end homelessness, there is evidence that permanent supportive housing is more effective than the traditional method of requiring homeless individuals to accept treatment as a condition for shelter or of only utilizing temporary shelters. Research has discovered that providing homelessness with permanent housing along with voluntary in-house services serves to promote stability and individual well-being.

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COUNCIL

I strongly support the River Street Residence. This program model has proven to be a very successful approach to ending homelessness on the Mainland.

I have visited the Housing First programs in Chicago and was very impressed by them. There was not anyone loitering on that block, while only a few blocks away, the other neighborhoods had not changed. The businesses on that block said that their area was improved by this program moving on to their block and they were happy that they were there. This helped their businesses since its moving there helped to make it a peaceful and clean neighborhood.

I thank you for the opportunity to voice my strong support for the River Street Residence project and ask for your support of the project.

Sincerely,

Ken Akinaka, MRA
Ken Akinaka, MRA
Executive Director
Hepatitis Support Network of Hawai'i